

## Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 /070 W

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R 070710Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5780

INFO AMCONGEN ASMARA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ADDIS ABABA 9498

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN ELAB ET

SUBJECT: LABOR PROBLEMS IN ETHIOPIAN TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

1. ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY BEEN FACED WITH LABOR PROBLEMS IN KEY TRANSPORT SECTOR AND HAS MOVED FIRMLY TO GET WORKERS BACK ON THE JOB. IN PAST THREE WEEKS, FIRST SEVERAL HUNDRED EMPLOYEES OF FOUR MEDIUM-SIZED ADDIS ABABA PRIVATE BUS FIRMS, REPRESENTING PERHAPS 120 BUSES, AND MORE RECENTLY EMPLOYEES OF FIRMS OPERATING 300 MINI-BUSES HAVE AGITATED FOR GOVERNMENT NATIONALIZATION OF PRIVATE TRANSPORT FIRMS.

2. ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT HAS REACTED FIRMLY, FORCING WORKERS BACK TO WORK. ON SATURDAY AUGUST 2, LOCAL PRESS CARRIED FRONG PAGE STORY CONDEMNING "REACTIONARY ELEMENTS" WHO WERE SEEKING TO UNDERMINE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION BY REFUSING TO WORK AND THUS ATTEMPTING TO PARALYZE PUBLIC TRANSPORT. REPORT NOTED THAT "IT HAD BEEN EXPERIENCE OF MANY COUNTRIES (READ CHILE?) THAT INPERIALISTS USUALLY RESORT TO PARALYZING A COUNTRY'S TRANSPORT SYSTEM APPARENTLY WHEN THEY TRY TO OPPOSE THE COUNTRY'S REVOLUTIONARY MOVES." GOVERNMENT ISSUED STRONGLY WORDED PUBLIC WARNING THAT UNLESS WORK RESUMED, WORKERS WOOULD FACE "STERN MEASURES". AS OF AUGUST4, ALL TRANSPORT WORKERS HAD RETURNED TO THEIR JOBS.

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3. COMMENT. WORKERS APPARENTLY BELIEVED THAT SALARIES WOULD BE RAISED AND PENSIONS AND OTHER FRINGE BENEFITS WOULD BE INSTITUTED IF THEY BECAME GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES VIA NATIONALIZATION OF TRANSPORT FIRMS. THERE HAVE BEEN NO SUCH DEVELOPMENTS IN INDUSTRIES PREVIOUSLY NATIONALIZED.

4. PMAC'S REACTION TO WORKERS' DEMANDS SUGGESTS THAT, FOR THE TIME BEING AT LEAST, THEY HAVE NO INTEREST IN NATIONALIZING THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY. THIS INSTANCE ALSO REPRESENTS THE FIRST TIME THAT GOVERNMENT HAS CRACKED DOWN ON WORKERS PUBLICLY AND TOLD THEM TO GET BACK TO WORK.  
HUMMEL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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